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A STUDY OF THE METHODS INVOLVED IN THE RECRUITING AND TRAINING OF
HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENT VOLUNTEERS IN THREE SOCIAL WELFARE
AGENCIES IN PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"The strength of a democratic agency may be measured by the quality of services rendered by the volunteer."¹ Numerous records and papers have been written on the quality of services rendered by the volunteer since the practice began. This quality of service has been so influential in the development of social welfare agencies that the volunteer might well be called the forerunner of modern social work practices.

For centuries before the rise of modern social work volunteers served the communities in which they lived. When the changes of the latter part of the nineteenth century--following the industrial revolution in this country made necessary new methods for dealing with new problems, it was far-sighted volunteers who conceived and organized social work as it is known today.²

As social welfare agencies became more clearly defined in structure and purpose there was greater recognition of the need for trained professional workers to work hand in hand with the volunteer. The variety of service plus the volume of work in the agencies increased the professional worker's awareness of the need for volunteer service in social welfare agencies. Some of the capacities in which the volunteer functioned were interpreting social work, providing entertainment for the sick, aged or physically handicapped; and serving as group leaders in various types of settlements.

The inquiries, criticisms and cooperation of volunteers have had a

¹ Statement made by Edward L. Lindemann, at the National Conference of Social Work, Buffalo, New York, 1946.

² "Volunteers in Social Work," Social Work Year Book, 1933.

definite effect on the progress of social work. The following statement shows:

Agencies have learned anew that volunteers can make a real and useful contribution, directly, through actual service to people and interpretation to the community, and indirectly, through the understanding and knowledge they may acquire of general and specific social work philosophy, standards, structure and method.¹

The recent World War II gave great impetus to volunteer service. Citizens joined together as air-raid wardens, nurses' aides and entertainers in defense of their country. In a paper on "Volunteers," Dorothy H. Sills states:

America's entry into World War II as an active combatant accelerated the urge of its citizenry, already stimulated during "defense days" to play an active part in the total war effort. In addition to the millions directly engaged in military and war production activities it has been estimated that more than ten million shared as volunteers in community projects of various kinds, including the social services.²

An even more recent trend has been the use of high school and college students as volunteers in hospitals, group work agencies and case work agencies. In some instances, students received credit for volunteer service. Other students have given volunteer services for either an opportunity to develop new capacities or to become acquainted with the social welfare services of the community. Many social welfare agencies have taken cognizance of the fact that well planned methods of recruiting and training student volunteers increased the willingness of the students to give more volunteer service. These methods also enhanced the possibilities of the student becoming an interpreter of social work to the lay public.

The definition of the term volunteer service gives added significance

¹Dorothy H. Sills, Volunteers in Social Service (New York, 1947), p. 7.

²Ibid.

to detailed planning for those individuals desirous of participation in social welfare services. Volunteer service is defined as: "the participation without pay by an individual in the agencies and programs of his community."¹ If the volunteer is to gain a feeling of worthwhileness from the service he gives and if his participation is to help him meet some of his needs there must be standards in the practices of recruiting, selecting, and training for him. It is very likely that there will always be a need for volunteer service in social welfare agencies; consequently the same standards will facilitate the securing and maintaining of volunteers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to show the methods involved in the recruiting and training of high school and college students, volunteers in three selected agencies, each having a different setting.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to the recruiting, selection and assignment of high school and college student volunteers as set up by the Philadelphia Council of Volunteers. The period studied is from September 1948 to January 1950. This study also includes a description of the training and supervision that these students received in three social welfare agencies in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The three agencies selected for the study are Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association, a legal aid organization, and Friends' Neighborhood Guild, a group work agency.

¹The Advisory Committee on Volunteer Service of the Community Chests and Councils, Inc. Statement of Principles of Volunteer Service, (New York Community Chests and Councils Inc., 1945), p. 1 (mimeographed.)

Method of Procedure

The procedure for collecting material used for this study is as follows:

1. Personal interviews with executive directors and supervisors of volunteers in the three agencies studied.
2. Reading records and reports from the agencies.
3. Reading material pertinent to the subject in books, pamphlets, periodicals and papers.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

Philadelphia Council on Volunteers

The Philadelphia Council on Volunteers was organized in September, 1946 as a member of the Community Chests and Councils of Philadelphia and vicinity. This Council was an outgrowth of World War II, although many agencies were organized before the war. In one of her articles on volunteers, Katherine Rogers Van Slyck states that, "the increasing of America's defense program was a spur to the organization of more volunteer bureaus and at the outbreak of the war there were fifty bureaus in operation."¹ At the close of the war there were many civilians who had made contributions during the war as hostesses for U. S. O., Gray Lady service with the Red Cross, and serving as group leaders in canteens. Many of these civilians felt that they would like to continue giving volunteer service. This statement is in agreement with Mrs. Violet M. Seider who states that "through war service many men and women are getting satisfactions that they will wish to continue through some community service in the post war world."² This situation emphasized the need for a council or bureau for placing volunteers in agencies in which they could continue to render aid. A committee was appointed to make an intensive study as a means of further determining the need for a Council of volunteers.

The first office of the Council was a temporary location in the Community

¹"Volunteers in Social Work," Social Work Year Book, 1947.

²"Volunteers in Social Work," Social Work Year Book, 1945.

Chest building. Miss Suzanne Cope was appointed executive director of the new organization. At this time the executive was given a budget by the Community Chest Council and asked to find a suitable office location. Miss Cope's educational background included a B. S. in Physical Education, a Master Degree in Educational Psychology and post graduate work at University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. This executive brought to her new position a background of work experience in the Health Education and Industrial departments of the YWCA. During the war, Miss Cope was affiliated with the United Service Organization in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Aside from the executive director, the staff consists of two referral secretaries and an office secretary.

The Council on Volunteers' office is now located in the Broad Street Commercial Trust Building. Financial support for the Council was secured entirely from the Philadelphia and vicinity Community Chests and Councils.

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania is located on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania between Spruce, Pine, Twenty-fourth and Thirty-sixth streets. It was built on the site of what was known as the Almshouse Farm.¹ The medical faculty, board of trustees and other interested citizens responsible for building the hospital stipulated in the plans that at least fifty free beds would be forever maintained for the care and relief of the poor in times of sickness or accident.²

¹Charles A. Lawrence, History of Philadelphia's Almshouses and Hospitals (Philadelphia, [n.d.]), p. 290.

²Ibid., pp. 290-291.

The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania has a bed capacity of six hundred ninety-seven and fifty-six bassinets. The type of cases treated there are medical, surgical, maternity, pediatrics, cancer, eye and orthopedics; also, there are ten clinics in the hospital. Special facilities include a physical therapy department, a blood bank, diagnostic and therapeutic X-ray. Financial support for the hospital comes from four sources, which are private endowment, university endowment, State endowment and Philadelphia and vicinity Community Chest.¹

This hospital serves individuals from all income levels as well as all races, creeds and colors. The city of Philadelphia has attempted to have individuals allocated to hospitals in their own communities; however, persons from the entire city and the State of Pennsylvania are served at the University Hospital.²

Miss Effie Lang is supervisor of hospital volunteers. Upon completion of her undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania, Miss Lang took professional training at the University School of Nursing. Miss Lang has supervised nurses in the hospital and also has been supervising volunteers since 1942.

Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association

The Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association was founded in April, 1934 by Francis Fisher Kane. For his work in finding such an organization,

¹ Interview with Miss Effie Lang, Supervisor of Volunteers, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 9, 1950).

² Ibid.

Mr. Kane received the Book Award. The Defender office is located at Number 4 South Fifteenth Street.

The purpose of the agency is to render a concrete community service through the furnishing of a competent counsel without charge to impoverished people accused of crime. Subsequently, the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Defender Association states its purpose as follows:

The services which this Association offers, concrete as they may be, are not self-contained. They are part and parcel of the modern penological trend to individualize the man, and where possible to help him so that when he is returned to society he will want to be law abiding. A man who has been rushed to trial without understanding the nature of the charges against him, without witnesses being called on his behalf and without counsel to guide him, is not likely to develop a respect for the administration of justice. Under such circumstances, the bitterness engendered in those who believe that they were not afforded a fair hearing and were not given an opportunity to fully present their side of the case in court is not likely to be eradicated on their releases.

On the other hand, a man who believes he has been dealt with fairly and decently from the time of his arrest to the final disposition of his case, even if convicted, is apt to come out of prison better prepared to accept conditions of liberty imposed by the parole authorities, and in the end those imposed by society. If a man is acquitted he will emerge from the experience with a deeper understanding of the true meaning and worth of our democratic way of life.¹

People of all races, creeds and colors receive benefit of the agency's services. Many of them are in the lower income brackets and some are mentally disturbed.

Three regular staff lawyers, three outside investigators and three clerical workers comprise the Defender staff. Volunteer lawyers give service for a period of one month. Arrangements with the Veterans Administration make possible the services of volunteer psychiatrists who examine the clients at the County prison as a need arises, and thereafter

¹Fifteenth Annual Report of the Directors of the Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association, May, 1949, pp. 1-2.

submit their reports to the Defender for the consideration of the presiding judge.

Herman I. Pollock is chief defender and director of the Association. Mrs. Helen C. Farber, chief social investigator for the Defender Association, is also a supervisor of volunteers. Mrs. Farber has been with the organization since it began in 1939; she has been supervising volunteers since 1941.

Friends' Neighborhood Guild

Friends' Neighborhood Guild, located at Fourth and Green Streets, is the oldest settlement in Philadelphia. It was founded by the First Day School Union of the Society of Friends in 1879. An old fish store, four blocks away from its present location, was the first Guild site. "It was then called 'Friends' Mission No. 1', and was organized to teach Bible and deportment to the neighborhood."¹ "The Settlement was largely operated by the members of the Green Street Meeting who built the Meeting House at Fourth and Green during the War of 1812."²

In 1914 the Guild moved to its present location, the old Green Street Meeting House. Although the Guild became a charter member of the Community Chest in 1922, the Friends continued to play an active part in support and aspirations of the Guild. Other financial support for the Guild includes a small income from capital and contributions from friends.

¹Elizabeth A. Deck, "The Role of The Group Worker in Helping A Member Make Use of Group Experience in a Settlement House," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, School of Social Work, University of Pennsylvania, 1948), p. 4.

²Ibid.

The Guild is not incorporated and has no constitution or by-laws. The Guild board operates under minutes from the Philadelphia Quarterly meeting. Its only charter is the seventh query of the Book of Discipline of the Philadelphia yearly meeting of the Religious Society of Friends which reads as follows:

What are you doing as individuals or as a Meeting
 To aid those in need of material help?
 To insure equal opportunities in social and economic
 life for those who suffer discrimination because of
 race, creed or social class?
 To create a social and economic system which will so
 function as to sustain and enrich life for all?¹

In this query is the whole philosophy of the Guild.

Through family memberships the Guild tries to serve the whole family and to strengthen the basic unit of our society, the family. Through a program of arts and crafts, teams and social clubs the agency strives to meet the educational and recreational needs of the membership. A Self-Help Housing Project is aiding to increase the sense of neighborhood and to involve membership in social action. Guild services extend from the Well-Baby Clinic to clubs for members over sixty-five years of age.

Francis Bosworth is executive director of the Guild, Frances Logan is program director; and Everett McCarter is business manager. There are twelve professional group workers on the staff and three second year graduate students of social work. A case worker assists the group workers in offering individual service, and one community organization worker assists the adult members in the area of community improvement through social action. The clerical staff consists of three full time workers. It would be impossible to conduct a program seven days a week at the Guild without

¹
Ibid., p. 6.

volunteer aid. Not only are student volunteers used, but also board members, members from the neighborhood, other interested individuals as well as groups render service. Two members of the staff and the three second year field work supervise volunteers. Both of the staff members supervising volunteers are professionally trained social workers. One has had three years experience as a supervisor of volunteers while the other has had two years experience.

Several ethnic groups constitute the community which the Guild serves these groups are Negro, White, Puerto Rican, Ukrainian, Russian, Poles and Displaced Persons. Keeping the agency interracial has always been the policy of the Guild; emphasis is placed on helping these groups become integrated into the community, city and country. A large number of tradespeople reside in the rear of the business establishments which they operate in the community. Although there are some few middle class families in the neighborhood, most of them are in the lower income brackets. This community has the highest case load of the Department of Public Assistance.

CHAPTER III

A DESCRIPTION OF THE AGENCIES RECRUITING AND TRAINING METHODS

Success or failure of the program of volunteer service including orientation, training, supervision, evaluation and promotion is determined largely by the thoroughness of the recruiting processes. "Many agencies agree that training begins with recruiting and carries on through all phases of the volunteer program."¹ Recruiting plans vary in different agencies and communities; however, the plan commonly used is the newspaper or radio channels. It has been felt by some individuals that these channels are not too effective for recruiting except when large numbers of people were desired for more or less routine tasks.

Such channels do not usually afford an adequate opportunity for full interpretation of the qualifications necessary for work in the social services, so that if they are used, the number of sifting interviews may become burdensome and relatively large percentage of the people who respond may be rejected.²

Recruiting volunteers through community groups and through individuals has proved the most practical method for securing those qualified to give service in a social welfare agency.

The selection of volunteers involves a screening process which determines to some extent the volunteers' qualifications and abilities for the available assignments. An interview forms the basis for screening the volunteer because it reveals his skills, abilities, interests, attitudes, experience

¹ Burton Gordon and Roxanna Jackson, "Citizen Participation in Health and Welfare Organizations," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, School of Social Work, Bryn Mawr College, 1949), p. 14.

² Dorothy H. Sills, op. cit., p. 27.

and background. This process eliminates those individuals who do not qualify for volunteer service. "By initial screening of volunteers it protects the agency against applicants who are entirely unsuited."¹

Assignment of volunteers should fit the volunteer to the job and the job to the volunteer. It should be in keeping with the expressed desires and interests of the person volunteering. Assignment of the volunteer should provide an opportunity to establish good relationships with agency staff people.

Throughout the training period orientation, supervision and evaluation are continuous. They form the basic elements in a volunteer program. Training should be carefully planned in accordance with the assignment for volunteers, the qualifications of volunteers and the agency's objective in enlisting them. Volunteers should take part in planning their training program because they are often more aware of their needs in relation to the job to be done than the person appointed to formulate the training program. A well planned training program begins with recruiting and continues through all phases of the volunteer's work experience.

Orientation is the process by which the volunteer become acquainted with the agency's objective, purpose and function in the community. It is obvious then that this is a continuous process integrated with training. The content of orientation will vary, depending upon the program of the agency and the functions which will be assigned to volunteers. Nevertheless, the beginning phase of orientation should include a clear concise explanation of the volunteer's assignment and the administrative routines

¹"Volunteers in Social Work," Social Work Year Book, 1947.

that must be observed. Through orientation a new person coming into the agency is enabled to develop his feeling of belonging.

The term supervision when applied to volunteers has been defined as follows:

Supervision is essentially a relationship of people, basically between two persons. In this relationship one person--the supervisor by virtue of special preparation and experience in a particular field of work, assumes by job assignment responsibility for helping another person with relatively less equipment and experience in the particular field to develop his abilities in it so that he can do a more effective job; derive great satisfaction from such doing and grow continuously as a person.¹

Accordingly when supervision is carried out in this manner, it is an emphasis of the training process. The volunteer learns from this type of supervision to become critical of his own work, to see the significance in what he is doing and how/what he is doing fits into the entire program. Volunteers should have one specific staff person designated as their supervisor, to whom they are responsible. The supervisor should be accessible for planned discussions or conferences on problems the volunteer may have related to the job to be done.

Regular and planned evaluation should be an essential part of the supervisory process. "Since more students are doing volunteer service for high school or college credit more careful written evaluations are being done on volunteers."² The evaluation should be based on the volunteer's performance on the job, it should be helpful to his development and assist him in improving his services. Written evaluations should be shared with

¹Keeping the Vision in Supervision (New York U. S. O. Publication), National Board of the Y. W. C. A., 1944, p. 3.

²Selsker M. Gunn and Phillip S. Platt, Voluntary Health Agencies, An Interpretative Study (New York, 1945), p. 324.

the volunteer thereby providing an opportunity for discussion on his strengths as well as his weaknesses.

Philadelphia Council on Volunteers

Recruiting.--Recruiting for most of the social welfare agencies in the city of Philadelphia is handled by the Council on Volunteers. When an agency makes a request for volunteers, the Council immediately makes an evaluation of the agency desiring volunteer service. This procedure is followed so that the Council will know the type of agency making the request and the methods used for training volunteers. Items included in this review have bearing on the agency's previous use of volunteers, the type of program provided for volunteers and the supervision of volunteers. This review of the agency may point up the need for consultation service in planning a volunteer program which the Council can provide. The Council is interested in helping agencies maintain maximum effectiveness in the supervision of volunteers; therefore, a review of the agency will possibly determine its needs in preparing for a volunteer program.

If an agency representative comes to the Council office or calls by telephone to request volunteer aid, a form is filled out entitled "Request for Volunteer Service" by a Council staff person.¹ Information asked for on this form includes date request is made, name of agency, address, telephone number, person's name making request, days and hours required, person volunteer reports to, number of volunteers needed, type of service requested and job description. It is felt that this kind of information is necessary when recruiting for volunteers.

¹ See Appendix, p. 36.

Recruiting of high school students as volunteers was initiated by the Council in April, 1947. This time of the year was selected as the beginning of the recruiting program because agencies were requesting a large number of volunteers for summer programs. Recruiting through groups is the method used by the Council for high school and college students. As the first step in recruiting, school Counselors are contacted by Council staff members in order to arrange for speeches to be made to assembly groups, classes and clubs. Council representatives inform the students through speeches of some of the services they can render as volunteers. They explain the jobs to be done in the various hospitals such as, writing letters or reading to the blind, or entertaining the patients at Children's Hospital. Students are informed as to how they can render service by either conducting or participating in clothing and toy drives for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Opportunities for group leadership in the Y. W. C. A. and the Y. M. C. A., Neighborhood Settlements and summer camps are also explained. Following the speeches, Council representatives hold interviews with students at the school in order to explore their possibilities as volunteers in the various agencies. "This method has not worked too well because it developed that many students come in to be interviewed as a means of escaping classroom routine or to satisfy their curiosity."¹ It was decided by the Council staff that interviews would be held in the Council office rather than in the schools. This procedure tends to eliminate students who do not have a real interest in volunteer service. Those who have an interest in rendering volunteer aid find no difficulty in going to the Council's office for interviews.

¹Interview with Miss Suzanne Cope, Executive Director, (Philadelphia Council on Volunteers, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 1, 1950).

Recruiting for college students began in September 1948. Council staff members talked with departmental heads in the colleges on the importance of helping college students gain an increased awareness of the functioning of social welfare agencies through volunteer service. As a result of the Council's interpretation Beaver College and Temple University made volunteer service a part of the curriculum for students majoring in sociology, elementary and secondary education. The latter school requires the students to give one semester of volunteer service while the former school requires two semesters. The purpose of these assignments is to determine whether the students are capable of establishing satisfactory working relationships with people and to acquaint them with the social agencies which helps them to see their role as citizens. This volunteer experience also aids in determining whether or not the students majoring in education should continue to prepare for the teaching profession. Through the experience sociology majors gain insight which enables them to make a decision as to future professional training for social work. Following the same procedure of recruiting high school groups the Council representative also made speeches to college students. In these speeches, social welfare agencies, their functions and job descriptions are interpreted. After such speeches the students who are interested are invited to the Council office for interviews.

Selection and Assignment.--All interviewing, selecting and assigning of volunteers is handled by the Council on Volunteers' referral secretaries. The interviews for high school and college students are of the same nature and the usual length of time for an interview is thirty to forty-five minutes. As the first step in the interview general information is obtained

such as name, address, telephone number, amount of time that can be given, special interests, skills and previous volunteer training courses completed.

Not all of the students who come in for an interview are selected for volunteer service. It is the responsibility of the referral secretary to determine whether the student is qualified to render the desired services. In the contact interview sometimes the referral secretary disqualifies students because of their apparent shyness, immaturity, or fear of certain communities. For some students the idea is at first exciting, but after the interview in which a fuller understanding of what volunteering to render a particular kind of service involves, they decide that they do not wish to do volunteer service. Those students who qualify but are not selected are told that their cards will be kept on file and at some future date it might be possible for them to give volunteer service.

Subsequently, the referral secretary and the prospective volunteer review available jobs. Because most assignments entail transportation from one section of the city to another, students are asked in the interview if their financial status will allow it. In logical order, agencies' locations are discussed for the purpose of placing students in their immediate communities to limit the transportation problem. It is also the function of the referral secretary to place college students majoring in sociology in case work agencies and those majoring in education in group work agencies.

The students selected for volunteer service make their own choice of agencies and the referral secretaries try to place them in the agencies selected if it is advisable. Those students with special skills which they would like to use are referred to agencies where they can use their ability

if it is felt that their personality is appropriate for the setting. "If the student accepts an assignment and later become dissatisfied he can return to the Council for another assignment."¹ Therefore, it is evident that the Council makes referrals rather than provide placement services. At the end of the interview the student is informed that he will receive notification of his agency assignment. A card is sent to the agency informing them of the assignment with an attached card for them to reply as to whether or not the volunteer has reported. This method of selecting and assigning volunteers has been used by the Philadelphia Council on Volunteers since it was first initiated in 1947.

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Orientation.--Students must be at least sixteen years of age to be accepted for volunteer service at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. When reporting for duty on the first day they are received by the person assuming the role of supervisor for the group. The supervisor takes the group on a tour of the hospital and points out the different wards and clinics. The students are then shown the room made available to them for keeping their wraps, resting and eating. The supervisor explains to the students that they are expected to accept responsibility, be punctual in reporting to work and give immediate notice when they are unable to report for work.

Job descriptions.--The types of jobs assigned to student volunteers are making beds, transporting patients to different departments, helping

¹ Interview with Miss Suzanne Cope, op. cit.

with trays and keeping the wards tidy. Most of the students do not know how to do these things when they come into the hospital to begin their service; therefore, they are placed on the wards with nurses who teach them how to perform these duties. Students assigned to the clinic serve as receptionists and do clerical work. "Those students who are capable of doing clerical work usually prefer to do some other type of job."¹ Students possessing skill in crafts are assigned to occupational therapy wards to help patients with their craft activities. If the students have skill in music or story-telling they are assigned to the children's ward. "In many instances those students with special skills ask for assignments that will afford them an opportunity to learn new skills."² This opportunity is provided in that the student is given some assignments in which he might use the skills he already has and some assignments in which he can gain knowledge of other skills."³

Student volunteers give four to eight hours per week service in the hospital when school is in session. In summer they give from two to three days per week, six to eight hours per day.

Supervision.--Supervisory conferences are not scheduled as a part of the student volunteers' program in this setting; however, the supervisor talks with the students occasionally regarding their work. She also tells the students that if at any time they wish to talk with her about the work she will be available. The types of jobs assigned to students do not require

¹ Interview with Miss Effie Lang, Supervisor of Volunteers, (Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 9, 1950).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

keeping records because they are usually routine jobs. Students are asked if they would like to have discussion groups at intervals; however, they always prefer not to have them. Their reason for refusal is that they would prefer using the time in doing the job.

Evaluation.--Student volunteers assigned to the hospital do not receive school credit for their service; consequently an evaluation is not sent to the schools. An evaluation form is mailed to the supervisor from the Council on Volunteers every two months which she fills out and returns. "Information asked for on this form includes the amount of time the student has given, promptness in reporting for work, attitude toward work and relationship with staff members."¹ This evaluation is not shared with the student since it is not written in detailed form. The supervisor talks with the nurses at intervals regarding the progress the students are making. In talking with the students the supervisor compliments them on the progress they are making or their efficiency in doing the job.

Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association

Orientation.--The supervisor welcomes the student volunteers to the agency and proceeds to introduce them to the staff members. This introduction of staff members to volunteers is conducted in an informal manner with the student volunteers meeting the staff people in their offices. "It is felt that this procedure aids in beginning a good relationship with staff and gives the new volunteer a more relaxed feeling."² Upon completion of the

¹Ibid.

²Interview with Mrs. Helen C. Farber, Chief Social Investigator, (Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 10, 1950).

introductions the supervisor explains the nature of the work, taking in agency aims and objectives. Student volunteers are informed of the importance of reporting to work at the assigned time and giving notice when they cannot report for duty. An explanation is given by the supervisor regarding the type of information to be obtained through an investigation. Before any investigations are assigned the student volunteers they are shown the office space in which they will do their work and they are given Defender cases to read as further explanations of how to make investigations. As the volunteers begin their job assignments their orientation will continue in that they will increase their knowledge of how to handle various types of investigations.

Job descriptions.--Voluntary Defender Association has some aspects of a social work agency. It is an organization that provides legal defense for indigent persons accused of crime. Referrals are made, by the Defender Association, to social welfare agencies when the need arises for services beyond their function. The following statement from the Association's Fourteenth Annual report clarifies the relationship between the legal organization and the social welfare agencies.

The Defender's primary duty is to render legal services rather than do social work. Nevertheless, the call for social work is constantly arising. When a client's problem appears more complex than can be solved by means of the specialized service we offer, referral is made to an appropriate social service agency. The association is an integral part of the community health and welfare program and endeavors to further that program by close cooperation and special arrangements with social service organizations.¹

¹Fourteenth Annual Report of the Directors of the Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May, 1948), p. 5.

College students interested in future training for social case work are usually assigned to this agency. Work in the Defender office provides the student an opportunity to develop skills pertinent to case work practices. Assignments for college student volunteers are as follows.

1. Outside investigation which sometimes entails visiting the homes of clients to check financial status and verify facts given by the defendant at the time of the interview.
2. As a part of office work they telephone employers to check on the defendant's statement as to employment.
3. They make telephone calls to the Board of Education to check on possible psychological records.
4. They assist with the registration of cases with the Social Service Exchange.
5. They assist with the notification of witnesses.
6. They write records of each investigation they make.¹

High school students are assigned clerical duties in the Defender office. "It is felt that they are not mature enough to carry out the procedures involved in making investigations."² The specific duties performed by high school students are typing, stamping envelopes and filing. Four to six hours per week is the average amount of time given by student volunteers.

Supervision.--Student volunteers are told that they are to feel free to ask any of the staff members for help when needed; in addition they also know that a supervisor has been assigned who is always available for consultation. This is made clear to the students when they report to the agency the first time. Student's records are read by the supervisor each week. If the record reveals situations which she considers are of

¹Interview with Mrs. Helen C. Farber, op. cit.

²Ibid.

importance and should be discussed, the student is asked to come in for a conference. Occasionally the supervisor will ask students if there are any questions relative to their work they would like to talk over. A weekly supervisory conference is not considered necessary because the student is given a different assignment each day and if the assignment is not completed it will be reassigned to another volunteer for completion. "The students have short term contracts with the individuals they interview, nevertheless, if their relationships with them were longer a scheduled supervisory conference would guide them in helping the clients."¹

Evaluation.--Temple University provides the supervisor with an outline of the evaluation to be sent in for their students, the items included are as follows:

1. Initial adjustment to the situation
2. Specific growth noted--amount of responsibility assumed
3. Strengths, improvements needed, weaknesses
4. Suggestions for additional experiences
5. Final evaluation as to personality, ability and character.²

In addition to writing individual evaluations for the student volunteers, the supervisor makes a comment on the group as a whole. The following statement is an example of the comment sent to Temple University. "All volunteers evidenced a genuine interest in people and yet were able to retain the necessary balance in seeing the picture as a whole."³

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Beaver College does not have an evaluation outline. The supervisor is requested to write the evaluation according to her own plan. This evaluation indicates the progress the student made from the time he entered the agency up to the end of his period of service. The items included in the evaluation are use of initiative, use of suggestions made, promptness in writing records and ability to instill a feeling of confidence in the client. The supervisor also describes the student's personalities as exemplified in the relationships with the staff and making investigations. As further explanation of this some evaluations describe the student as warm, friendly and cooperative while others are described as rather reserved when they first come into the agency but later changing as they became more familiar with the work. "An important phase of the evaluation is the student's growth and maturity in using insight in cases this makes possible the assignment of more difficult cases."¹

Evaluations for high school students are sent to the Council on Volunteers' Office. Information in this evaluation includes the students' ability to follow directions, their attitude toward work, and their relationship with staff.

Friends' Neighborhood Guild

Orientation.--Students assigned to the Guild begin their orientation by meeting as a group with the program director of the agency. In this meeting they are given a brief history of the Guild and a picture of the agency as it is now set up. The students are then shown over the building

¹Ibid.

and introduced to the Guild staff members.

The next procedure is an individual conference with the assigned supervisor. In this conference the student is told that he is to fill out a daily attendance sheet at the end of each group meeting; he is informed of the time scheduled for his weekly conference and reminded that he is expected to be punctual. The supervisor informs the student of his group assignment as regards type of group, age level, sex and size. At the end of the conference the supervisor accompanies the student to the program office and shows him the time book, the supply closet, the first aid cabinet, the daily attendance forms and the place in which wraps are kept. Orientation in this setting is also continuous; as the student volunteer begins his assignment he becomes more acquainted with the agency's routine.

Job descriptions.--Student volunteers serve as group leaders. They are assigned interest groups, social clubs and athletic groups. Since the agency serves several ethnic groups most of the student volunteers are leaders of interracial groups which are homogenous in sex. Age range for groups assigned to students is from five years to twenty-five years of age. The average membership for each group is twelve and they meet once a week for an average of one hour and a half. Group leadership also involves the student volunteers' use of initiative in helping the group pursue its interest in such ways as learning crafts to teach the group, securing records for dancing and securing the site for a picnic. Group records are written each time the student meets his group. These records are turned in to the supervisor before the supervisory conference and serve as a basis for the conference. The average amount of time given by student volunteers is two and one half days in the summer and four hours weekly in the winter.

Supervision.--In group work settings a scheduled supervisory conference

is essential because the new group leader is learning to work with a group of people. The supervisor has acquired knowledge and an ability to work with people; therefore, she is capable of helping the student volunteer gain knowledge that will increase his capacity to work with the group.

"People are generally reluctant to give volunteer service in a group work setting because they do not feel they are capable of working with a number of individuals."¹ From the supervisory conference the volunteer gains reassurance that he can function as a group leader. On a whole the standards of behavior in the community which the Guild serves are not socially acceptable. Consequently supervision enables the student to gain some understanding of the feelings and attitudes of the members of such a community. Supervision is not aimed at making the student a group worker but because of the different racial groups served he learns to work with them in building relationships.

Supervisory conferences are held each week before or after the volunteer meets his group. The average length of the conference time is thirty to forty-five minutes depending on the student's need to confer. Group records are read by the supervisor before the conference and discussed with the student in conference. The student is encouraged to bring to the conference any problems which he might have so that he and the supervisor can discuss them. Sometimes the student brings in suggestions pertinent to program and he talks over the use of these suggestions. If there are questions about agency policy which the student does not understand he brings them up in conference.

¹ Interview with Miss Suzanne Cope, op. cit., (December 7, 1949).

"Although student volunteers are assigned individual supervisors one third of a particular staff members' time is allocated to the planning and directing of the over-all training program for them."¹ This staff member meets with the entire group of student volunteers on an average of once a month during the period they give service. In this meeting the students discuss problems they have encountered in their experience; they exchange ideas as to what to do about the problems. They also discuss plans for their respective groups or (either) plans they have completed with the group. Speakers, from various social welfare settings, are occasionally invited to the meetings to speak on subjects pertinent to the student volunteers' growth and development.

Weekly seminars are held for student volunteers in the summer for a period of ten weeks. These seminars are conducted away from the agency setting in private homes of individuals interested in training for volunteers. Experts in their particular field are secured for the seminars to speak on topics of interest in the social welfare field or fields closely related to social work yet not bearing directly on the agency, such as housing, or labor problems. "The seminar group is interracial thereby providing an opportunity to develop an understanding of different racial groups in a learning situation."²

Evaluation.--An objective evaluation form is filled out by the supervisor for students from Temple University. This form consists of a list of

¹Interview with Mrs. Frances Walker Logan, Program Director, (Friends' Neighborhood Guild, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 16, 1950).

²Ibid.

statements concerning the student's ability to work with people; under each statement is a list of adjectives which best describe the student's ability in specified areas. The items listed in the form are as follows:

1. Group size, group activity, age level
2. Attitude toward children and adolescents
3. Response of children and adolescents to the student
4. Relationship to colleagues and superiors
5. Ability to grow in service
6. Quality of professional adjustment
7. Loyalty to co-workers
8. Punctuality in turning in reports
9. Punctuality in attendance
10. Ability to develop group leadership
11. Recognition of the different cultures in the community
12. Poise and objectivity in the presence of disturbing problems
13. Student's outstanding strengths and weaknesses
14. Recommendations for future training of student.¹

Beaver College does not have an evaluation form for its students; however, the supervisor is requested to write an evaluation of the student's work using her own method.

Two copies of the evaluation for high school students are written by the supervisor. One copy is sent to the Council on Volunteers; the other is kept for the agency. Included in this evaluation is a description of the student's attitude toward accepting responsibility, his relationship

¹Letter received from Temple University, (Department of Education, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 20, 1950).

with the group, punctuality in turning in reports, promptness in reporting to work and relationship to staff.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study describes the methods utilized by three social welfare agencies of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in recruiting and training high school and college student volunteers. The agencies studied are Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Voluntary Defender Association and Friends' Neighborhood Guild. The period studied is from September, 1948 through January, 1950.

The recruiting, selection and referral of student volunteers for these three agencies is conducted by the Philadelphia Council of Volunteers. These processes are integrated with the three agencies' in-service training program for student volunteers.

A study of the recruiting methods shows that, a well planned recruiting program provides interpretation that gives students a knowledge of the what, why, where and how in social welfare agencies. The response of the students to this interpretation can best be summed up in a statement made by a high school senior in a panel discussion, "Learning and Service" at the Mid-Winter Conference of The Philadelphia Council on Volunteers which is as follows:

Once young people acquire a knowledge of social welfare agencies their interest is aroused and it becomes fun to go out and do things for people. It gives us the satisfaction of knowing we have helped someone.¹

The study showed that the Council used a screening process in selecting volunteers. This is a vital factor in the selection of volunteers in

¹Statement made by Paul Hornung at the Mid-Winter Conference, Philadelphia Council on Volunteers, (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 30, 1950).

that it eliminates to some extent those individuals unsuited for rendering service. Student volunteers are recruited as a group which also makes screening essential because not all students' personalities have developed to the point where they are ready to give volunteer service. Those volunteers, selected by the Council, are allowed to make their own choice of agency. The Council makes the referral and if the volunteer becomes dissatisfied with the placement he may request another assignment.

The training program in each agency provides orientation, supervision, and evaluation for the student volunteers. The procedure for these phases varies according to the agency setting. In each of the three agencies, orientation begins the first day the student volunteer reports to the agency. It is clearly shown that orientation is a continuous part of the program with the volunteers acquiring more knowledge of the agencies' functions and purpose as they carry out their assignments.

One person serves as supervisor of student volunteers at the Defender Association and the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. At Friends' Neighborhood Guild supervisory responsibility is delegated to one staff person and three second year graduate social work students. A scheduled supervisory conference is not provided for student volunteers at the Defender Association and the Hospital. However, the supervisor is always available for consultations and the staff in these agencies assist with the training of the students. A weekly supervisory conference is provided for student volunteers at Friends' Neighborhood Guild. This conference aids the student volunteer in gaining knowledge for carrying out his role of group leader. Weekly seminars in the summer and volunteer meetings at intervals during the winter are also part of the Guild's training program for student volunteers.

Evaluations of the students' work are written by the supervisors in each study. The evaluations cover these areas of performance: promptness in reporting to work, giving immediate notice when unable to report to work, accepting responsibility, use of suggestions given, relationship to staff and attitude toward work.

It is felt that this recruiting and training program has been valuable to the agencies and the students. In expressing her feelings about the recruiting methods, Miss Suzanne Cope states, "The process has been excellent; it provides a means of elimination for the Council as well as the student."¹ Miss Effie Lang, supervisor of student volunteers at the hospital feels that "the students gain a great deal of personal satisfaction from helping others and the program should continue."² The program has been beneficial to the students as is evidenced in the statement made by a student at the Philadelphia Council of Volunteers Mid-Winter Conference. The statement is as follows: "Volunteer work in the hospital has taught me so many things which will mean so much to me later in life."³ "The in-service training program for volunteers is a vital part of any social welfare agency's program."⁴ This study shows that these social welfare agencies are providing methods in recruiting and training high school and college students that improve the quality of volunteer service.

¹ Interview with Miss Suzanne Cope, op. cit.

² Interview with Miss Effie Lang, op. cit.

³ Statement made by Ann Levine at the Philadelphia Council on Volunteers Mid-Winter Conference (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 30, 1950).

⁴ Interview with Mrs. Frances Walker Logan, op. cit.

APPENDIX

The Purpose of the Council on Volunteers shall be:

To enlarge the knowledge, through participation, of men and women volunteers in social, health, civic and educational fields in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.

To develop a broader basis of understanding, by the agencies of the use of volunteers in widening the scope of their programs and interpreting them to the community.

Plan

The Council on Volunteers, to activate this purpose, shall coordinate the efforts of volunteer organizations, shall raise and maintain standards, shall stimulate the use of volunteers in the agencies, and recruit, place and educate men and women in opportunities of service.

Specific Functions

1. To coordinate the work of organizations, supplying volunteers for community projects.
2. To avoid duplication of services by acting as a clearing house on volunteer opportunities and referrals.
3. To maintain standards of service for the volunteer.
4. To maintain standards of service in the agency in the use of volunteers.
5. To stimulate agencies in the use of volunteers to their fullest extent.
6. To recognize service given by volunteers.
7. To make available existing training courses and to stimulate new ones where they are needed.
8. To register and place through its office, volunteers wishing to serve in community projects.

COUNCIL on VOLUNTEERS
115 Commercial Trust Building
Philadelphia 2, Penna.

Lo 7-3035

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

DATE _____

AGENCY _____

ADDRESS _____ TEL.# _____

PERSON MAKING REQUEST _____

PERSON VOLUNTEERS REPORT TO _____

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED _____ TYPE OF SERVICE REQUESTED _____

DAY OF WEEK & HOURS REQUIRED

JOB DESCRIPTION: _____

REMARKS OR COMMENTS _____

4/6/49

Signature

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